

ADDRESSING LOCOMOTIVE HORN NOISE

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**Town of Garrett Park
Citizens Association Meeting
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Background

CSX Metropolitan Subdivision

Also used by MARC (Brunswick Line) and Amtrak

Garrett Park at-grade railroad crossings:

- Rokeby Avenue – access into park: DOT Crossing No. 140492T
- Garrett Park Station – pedestrian crossing: DOT Crossing No. 938359X
- 19 trains/day – daylight; 13 trains/day - night



Background

Standards - Federal:

- Public crossings
 - Location where a public highway, road, or street crosses one or more railroad tracks at grade, or where maintained on both sides by a public authority (49 CFR 222.9)
 - 49 CFR part 222 – Use of Locomotive Horns at Public Highway-Rail Grade Crossings
- Private and pedestrian crossings
 - No federal requirement for horns
 - State law may require



Background

Standards - Federal:

- For public grade crossings – operator must sound horn at least 15 seconds, but no more than 20 seconds, in advance of public grade crossing
- “Good faith” exception allows use of horn for no more than 25 seconds where operator cannot precisely estimate arrival at crossing
- 2 long, one short, and one long blast – duration of “long” and “short” not specified



Background

Standards – State requirements:

- No applicable state requirements

Standards – CSX Operating Rules:

- Locomotive operator must sound signal when approaching public highway at-grade crossing or passenger station
- No requirement to sound horn at private or pedestrian crossings
- May not be used unnecessarily





Garrett Park Crossings

Rokeby Ave Crossing and Garrett Park Station crossings occupy gray area –

- No federal or state standards require horn use
- CSX Operating Rules apply



Garrett Park Crossings

Highlighted options:

- Negotiate agreement with CSX to prohibit horns sounding in Garrett Park except in case of emergency
- Seek re-designation of Rokeby Ave Crossing as public crossing and pursue FRA quiet zone
 - If quiet zone established through this process, crossing at Garret Park Station will be included in quiet zone

Quiet Zone

- Must be at least ½ mile in length
- Contain at least one public at-grade crossing
- Have gates installed at each public crossing located in the quiet zone
- Be established by a public authority who maintains the subject crossing
- Requires coordination with CSX



Quiet Zone

- Must demonstrate that lack of train horn will not present significant risk for loss of life or serious personal injury OR
- Demonstrate that any significant risk has been compensated for through other means
- Can be costly to install crossing guards, bells



Questions?

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